

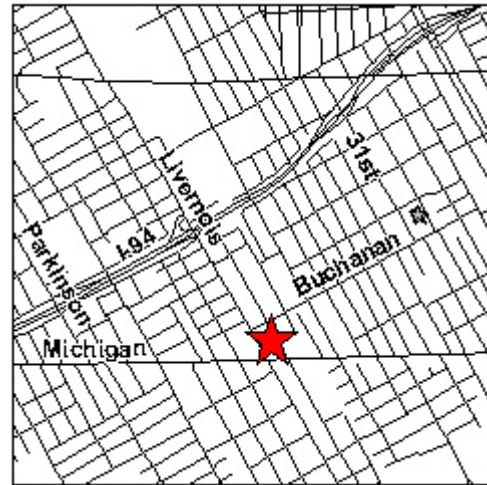
Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church

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Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church



Historic overview:

Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church was the third Missouri Synod Lutheran Church in Detroit. The first, St. Trinity, came in 1850 after a rift with St. Matthew's. The second, Evangelical Lutheran Immanuel Church organized in 1865, is the parent church to Zion, which began meeting in 1882. Immanuel donated the lot and the building. The frame Gothic Revival was complete in 1883, and a new four-room school was finished by 1885. Services were held in German. With the purchase of additional property, Immanuel's old school building was also moved to the Zion site and converted into the first parsonage. The school, founded in 1877, is the oldest continually operating non-Catholic parochial school in the City of Detroit.

In 1928, the congregation decided to demolish the old church and replace it with a new stone one, paying for it with funds and work pledged by the congregation. The Great Depression held off the erection of the church for a few years, but it was finally dedicated in 1933 with services in English and German. Today, Zion Lutheran Church occupies the site of the frame structure that had been used for over 50 years. In 1955 the parsonage was converted to a two-family teachers residence. By 1964 a new school and activity center was built. This activity center contains a nursery, reception room, lounge, kitchen, college-sized gymnasium that doubles as an auditorium and classrooms. This building is symbolic of the church's commitment to serve the neighborhood no matter what its makeup. Zion admitted its first black member in 1962 and has actively sought membership from the community it was a part of.



